

FINALE: SPAWN'S NEW ORIGIN

image

Special 227<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

# SPAWN

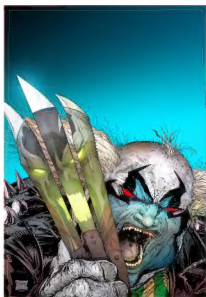
DIGITAL  
EDITION

227  
JAN

APPROVED  
BY THE  
IMAGE  
COMICS







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## PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

Twenty-three years ago, Jason Wynn is an eager, young CIA operative when he is introduced to the clandestine, Earth-bound war between Heaven and Hell. As Wynn and his superiors meet with a pair of Heavenly representatives to further a thriving relationship between the forces of light and the United States government, Wynn has little understanding of the full scope of the world he has just entered.

But over the years, Wynn's influence grew, along with his ambitions. When he was offered the chance to control a new kind of weapon, he jumped at the opportunity, leading to his eventual partnership with a man named Kramer, and the birth of the mysterious military program known as "Project: Ragnorok".



**Jim Downing (Spawn)** – A man whose past is shrouded in mystery, and connected intimately to the very fabric of the *Spawn* mythos, Jim is the world's newest Hellspawn... and so much more. Having spent years in a deep coma, Jim's main drive is piecing together the fragments of the man he was, in an effort to discover the man he truly is.



**Director Kramer** – Before Jim Downing woke from his coma in *Spawn* #185 he lead a completely different life – was a completely different man, with a different name, different physical appearance and quite possibly sinister motivations driven by unchecked ambition. Director Kramer ran the clandestine government program, RAGNOROK and, unknowingly had a hand in crafting some of the darker aspects of the *Spawn* universe.



**The Program** – A clandestine military operation with deep-rooted ties to events from throughout *Spawn*'s 20-year existence. Hidden within the secrets of The Program, also known as Project: RAGNOROK, lies the truth Jim seeks, and the dark heart of a past better left buried.



**Richard Masullo (Tremor)** – Transformed into the hulking monster known as Tremor by the same clandestine government program that Jim Downing once oversaw, Richard is a man on a mission, crossing the country to confront Jim about their shared past -- but is he friend or foe?



**Jason Wynn** – At one time considered to be among the most powerful men on the planet, Jason Wynn ran a number of covert government programs with far-reaching influence, before his shocking and sudden fall from grace. Wynn's connection to the events surrounding Jim Downing's "rebirth" further cement his role as a master manipulator.

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SPAWN CREATED BY  
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**image**

**TODD McFARLANE**  
PRODUCTIONS  
**SPAWN.COM**



"I WAS SO CLOSE..."

"AFTER YEARS OF SEARCHING, SCOURING THOUSANDS OF FILES-- HE FINALLY APPEARED."

"MY STAFF-- THEY COULDN'T SEE IT. THEY SAID HE WASN'T ANY DIFFERENT FROM HUNDREDS OF OTHERS WE INTERVIEWED BEFORE HIM."

"IT WASN'T WHAT HE SAID, OR THE WAY HE ACTED. IT WAS *HIS EYES*. EVERYTHING I NEEDED TO KNOW WAS THERE WITH THE SOULLESS LOOK HE FIRST GAVE ME."

"GOD-- HE WAS PERFECT!"

"BUT I KNEW... THE MOMENT HE WALKED IN THE ROOM."

"HE HAD DEVOTION, STRENGTH, AND COMPLETE AND UTTER *INDIFFERENCE* TO THE VIOLENCE HE INFLICTED."



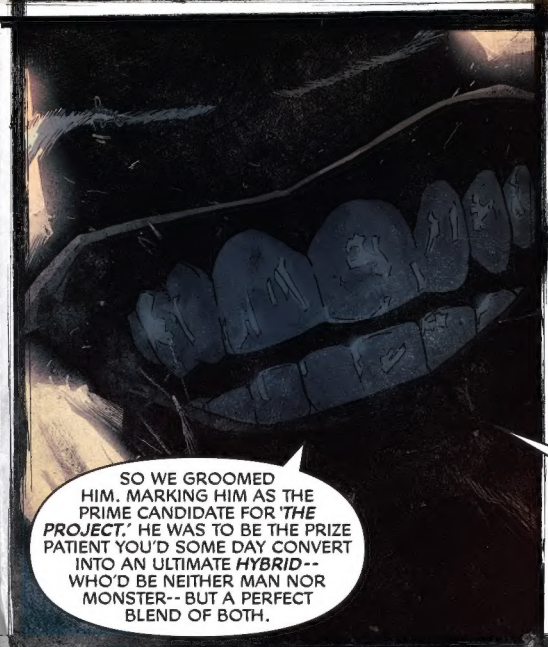


IT WAS  
MAGNIFICENT!



HE ALWAYS  
HAD A CLEAR  
VISION OF WHAT HE  
WAS DOING-- LIKE AN  
ARTIST PAINTING A  
MASTERPIECE.

THAT'S  
WHY I CHOSE  
HIM. I KNEW THIS  
RARE FIND COULD  
EVENTUALLY MEET  
HELL'S NEEDS.



SO WE GROOMED  
HIM. MARKING HIM AS THE  
PRIME CANDIDATE FOR 'THE  
PROJECT.' HE WAS TO BE THE PRIZE  
PATIENT YOU'D SOME DAY CONVERT  
INTO AN ULTIMATE *HYBRID*--  
WHO'D BE NEITHER MAN NOR  
MONSTER-- BUT A PERFECT  
BLEND OF BOTH.



AND WITH  
HIS DELIVERY  
TO HELL I WOULD  
BE GIVEN ALL THE  
JUST REWARDS  
I'D BEEN  
PROMISED.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL  
**AL SIMMONS.**  
THAT WAS HIS NAME.  
TEN TIMES THE MAN  
YOU'LL EVER BE!





YEAH?  
THEN WHY  
AM I  
WEARING HIS  
COSTUME?

IT'S NOT A  
COSTUME. IT'S  
ARMOR.



LIVING  
ARMOR.

AN  
IMPORTANT  
DISTINCTION  
YOU'VE YET TO  
LEARN. MEANING  
THE SYMBIOTE NOW  
CONTROLS YOU--  
YOUR EXISTENCE AS  
JIM DOWNING IS  
A COMPLETE  
FRAUD!



YOU'RE  
JUST  
A CATALYST  
FOR THE  
ARMOR!



SHINK

SHINK

EITHER  
WAY... YOUR  
BOY SIMMONS  
IS DEAD. I'M  
NOT!



**YOU IDIOT!**

DON'T YOU GET IT?  
HE WAS THE ONE YOU  
WANTED!!! WHAT YOUR  
EXPERIMENTS WERE ABOUT!  
YOU WERE SO GODDAMN  
**SELF-ABSORBED**-- TRYING  
TO ALTER YOUR PATIENTS'  
D.N.A.-- THAT YOU NEVER  
THOUGHT THAT MAYBE,  
JUST MAYBE, SOME OF  
THAT D.N.A. WAS  
**ALREADY THERE!**



"YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO SPICE ANY  
GENES OR HAVE YOUR STAFF DISSECT  
EVERY POSSIBILITY... BECAUSE HE  
**ALREADY HAD IT IN HIM!**



"BUT WE NEVER GOT TO HIM!  
BECAUSE YOU F\*CKED EVERYTHING  
UP BEFORE THAT. YOUR F\*CKING  
DELUSIONS AND PARANOIA-- IT  
RUINED IT FOR ALL OF US! I DIDN'T  
SHUT US DOWN, THE WHITE HOUSE  
DID! **BECAUSE OF YOU!**



"YOU DIDN'T  
DELIVER!"

"AND WE HAD HIM!!  
SIMMONS WAS READY TO  
GO BEFORE YOU SHIT ON  
EVERYTHING! HE WAS  
SUPPOSED TO BE YOUR  
**LAST PATIENT!"**

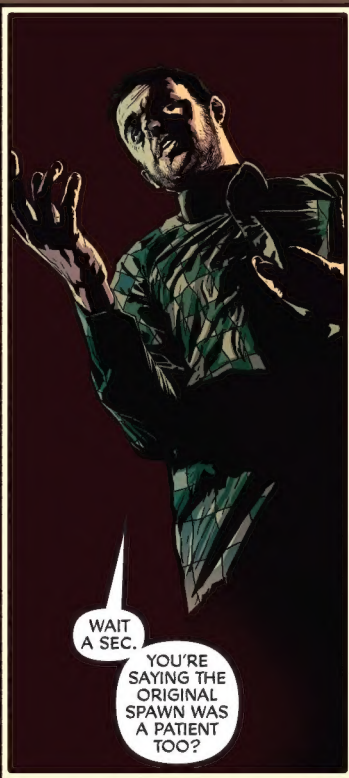


HE WAS  
**NUMBER  
47!!**

YOU  
UNDERSTAND  
THAT?... SIMMONS  
WAS SUPPOSED TO  
BE PATIENT 47!  
**NOT YOU!!**







WAIT  
A SEC.

YOU'RE  
SAYING THE  
ORIGINAL  
SPAWN WAS  
A PATIENT  
TOO?



NO!

WEREN'T  
YOU LISTENING?  
WE *DIDN'T* GET  
TO HIM!

AND  
WHAT MADE  
SIMMONS  
DIFFERENT?



KRAMER'S  
MADNESS CUT  
OFF OUR  
FUNDING...

THAT  
WASN'T MY  
QUESTION.



THUD



WHAT... MADE  
SIMMONS... SO  
DIFFERENT?

EVERYTHING!





AT LEAST THE THINGS THAT MATTERED. 'THE PROJECT' WAS MEANT TO BUILD THE ULTIMATE WEAPON. THE HUMAN HYBRID. THAT MEANS IT WAS MEANT FOR KILLERS. SOLDIERS. HUNTERS. WARRIORS.



AND SADLY, RICHARD, NEITHER YOU NOR KRAMER QUALIFIED FOR ANY OF THOSE.



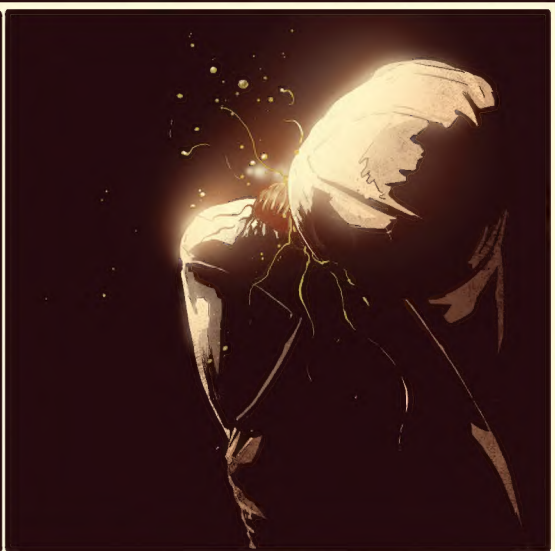
HELL, DIRECTOR KRAMER HERE EVEN STOOD BY WHILE WE MURDERED HIS LOVELY WIFE.



"THAT'S BECAUSE 'THE PROJECT' WASN'T MEANT TO EXPERIMENT ON SCIENTISTS OR BUSINESSMEN. WE LEARNED TOO LATE, IT WAS BUILT FOR MEN LIKE SIMMONS."



EVERYONE ELSE-- YOURSELF INCLUDED-- WERE NEVER WIRED PROPERLY. THAT MADE ALL OF YOU UNPREDICTABLE. AND ALSO... EXPENDABLE.





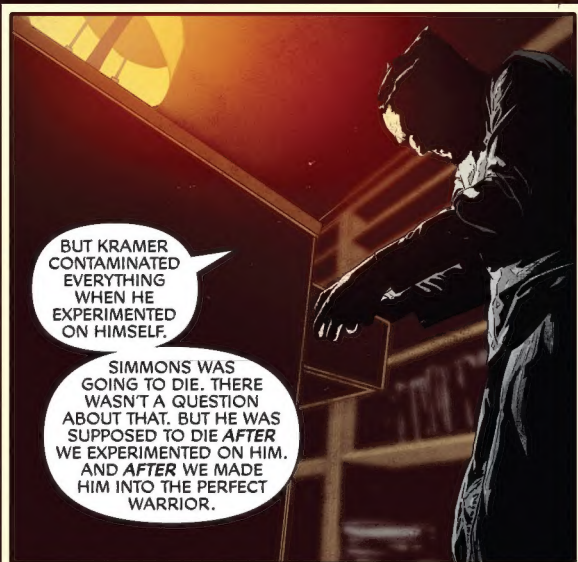


SO ME BECOMING 'TREMOR' WAS JUST PART OF THE PROCESS?

AND WHETHER WE LIVED OR DIED WAS YES. IRRELEVANT?

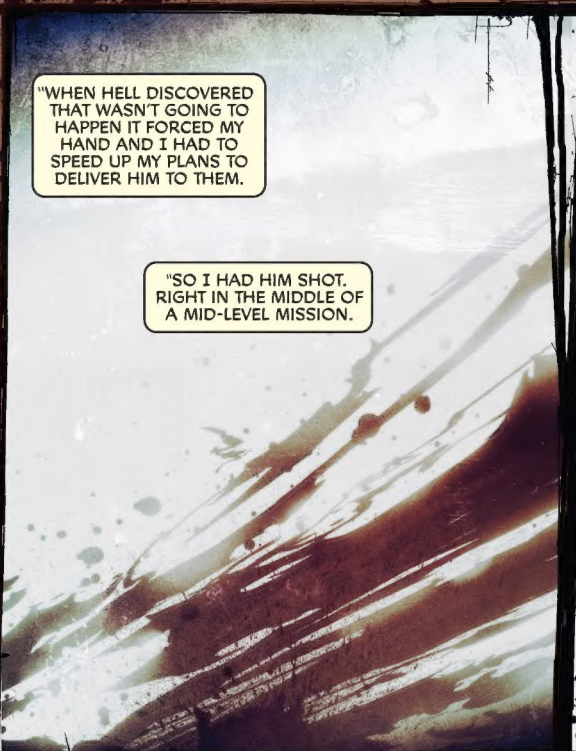


"ESSENTIALLY. WHAT MATTERED WAS THAT THE **RIGHT PERSON** NEEDED TO DIE. THAT WAS SIMMONS.



BUT KRAMER CONTAMINATED EVERYTHING WHEN HE EXPERIMENTED ON HIMSELF.

SIMMONS WAS GOING TO DIE. THERE WASN'T A QUESTION ABOUT THAT. BUT HE WAS SUPPOSED TO DIE **AFTER** WE EXPERIMENTED ON HIM. AND **AFTER** WE MADE HIM INTO THE PERFECT WARRIOR.



"WHEN HELL DISCOVERED THAT WASN'T GOING TO HAPPEN IT FORCED MY HAND AND I HAD TO SPEED UP MY PLANS TO DELIVER HIM TO THEM.

"SO I HAD HIM SHOT. RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF A MID-LEVEL MISSION.

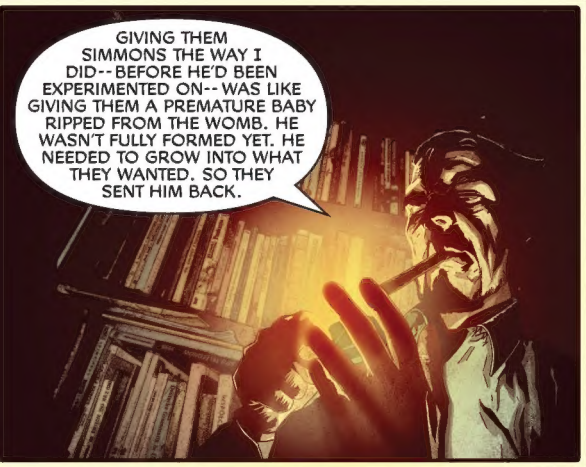


"I PROMISED HELL THEY'D GET THEIR WARRIOR-- AND UNLIKE OTHERS IN THIS ROOM-- I DELIVER ON MY PROMISES."






BUT THE  
DEMONS...  
THEY WEREN'T  
AMUSED.



GIVING THEM  
SIMMONS THE WAY I  
DID-- BEFORE HE'D BEEN  
EXPERIMENTED ON-- WAS LIKE  
GIVING THEM A PREMATURE BABY  
RIPPED FROM THE WOMB. HE  
WASN'T FULLY FORMED YET. HE  
NEEDED TO GROW INTO WHAT  
THEY WANTED. SO THEY  
SENT HIM BACK.



"THEY REJECTED HIM  
BECAUSE YOU  
COULDN'T WAIT!"



I GAVE THEM  
THE SACRIFICE THEY  
AGREED TO... BUT THEY  
**REJECTED HIM!**  
SAID HE NEEDED MORE  
TRAINING. MORE  
POWER!



BUT IT  
TOOK THEM  
FIVE YEARS TO  
DECIDE THAT! FIVE  
LONG YEARS  
BEFORE I SAW  
HIM AGAIN.



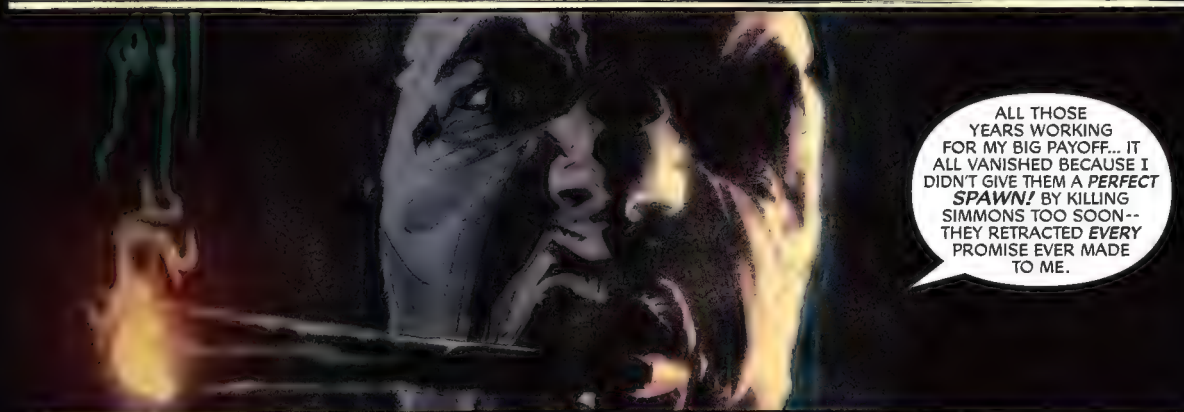


SO WHAT?  
YOU REBUILT YOUR  
POLITICAL POWER  
BASE, AND IT'S  
NOT LIKE SIMMONS  
KILLED YOU.

YOU KNOW  
WHAT I GOT OUT  
OF THE DEAL-- WHAT  
HELL GAVE ME FOR  
MY EFFORT OF FINDING  
THEM A HUMAN  
WARRIOR TO BATTLE  
HEAVEN?



NOTHING.




ALL THOSE  
YEARS WORKING  
FOR MY BIG PAYOFF... IT  
ALL VANISHED BECAUSE I  
DIDN'T GIVE THEM A **PERFECT  
SPAWN!** BY KILLING  
SIMMONS TOO SOON--  
THEY RETRACTED **EVERY**  
PROMISE EVER MADE  
TO ME.



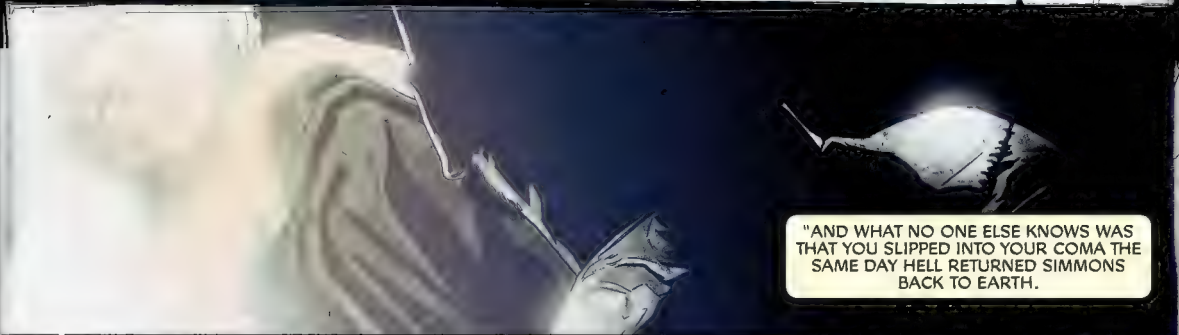
"AND THOUGH I WISHED  
**SPAWN** HAD KILLED ME--  
I KNEW I NEEDED A  
BACKUP PLAN."






"THAT CAME WHEN I HEARD THAT YOU'D EXPERIMENTED ON YOURSELF AWAY FROM EVERYONE ELSE AND THOUGH IT DIDN'T SURPRISE ME THAT YOU'D DO SOMETHING SO RECKLESS-- I NEEDED TO FIND OUT IF ANYTHING YOU DID TO YOURSELF MAY HAVE WORKED.

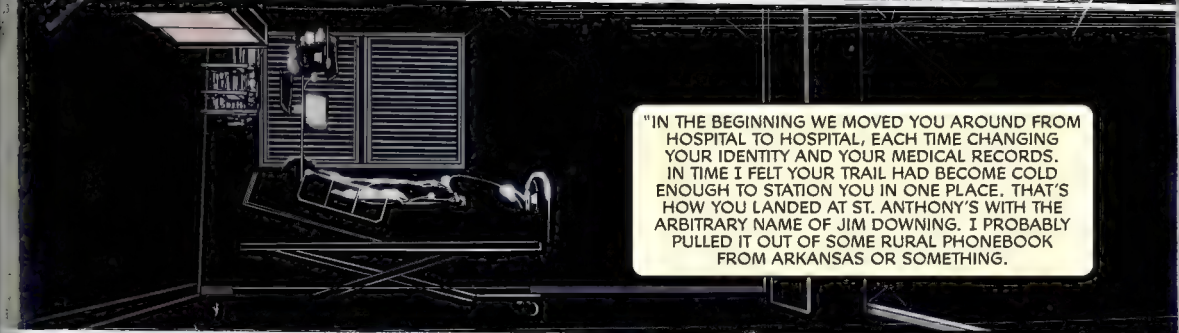
"BECAUSE THE THING THAT SCARED ME MOST WAS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU AND SIMMONS SHARED SOME WEIRD COMMONALITIES IN YOUR BRAIN PATTERNS. SO I HAD YOU WATCHED. FOR YEARS WE MONITORED YOU AND THEN ONE DAY WE FOUND YOU IN A COMA.




"AND WHAT NO ONE ELSE KNOWS WAS THAT YOU SLIPPED INTO YOUR COMA THE SAME DAY HELL RETURNED SIMMONS BACK TO EARTH.



"IT WAS FAIRLY EASY FOR ME TO WHISK YOU AWAY FROM YOUR RECLUSIVE LIFE AND WATCH OVER YOU ALL THESE YEARS.




"IN THE BEGINNING WE MOVED YOU AROUND FROM HOSPITAL TO HOSPITAL, EACH TIME CHANGING YOUR IDENTITY AND YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS. IN TIME I FELT YOUR TRAIL HAD BECOME COLD ENOUGH TO STATION YOU IN ONE PLACE. THAT'S HOW YOU LANDED AT ST. ANTHONY'S WITH THE ARBITRARY NAME OF JIM DOWNING. I PROBABLY PULLED IT OUT OF SOME RURAL PHONEBOOK FROM ARKANSAS OR SOMETHING.



"BUT MY PURPOSE OF KEEPING YOU AROUND WAS THAT SOMEDAY I MIGHT NEED A 'BARGAINING CHIP' AGAINST HELL OR A PEACE OFFERING WITH HEAVEN."






BUT WITH  
SIMMONS' RETURN MY  
LIFE QUICKLY GOT COMPLICATED.  
I HAD TO BUILD GLOBAL  
RELATIONSHIPS AND MILITARY  
STRENGTH OUTSIDE OF MY  
NORMAL CHANNELS.

"I EVEN VENTURED INTO A PACT WITH  
HEAVEN THAT TRANSFORMED ME INTO  
WHAT I THOUGHT WOULD BE MY FINAL  
DESTINY. BUT TRAITORS FROM BOTH  
HEAVEN AND HELL SAW TO IT THAT MY  
POWERS AS THE **REDEEMER** WOULDN'T  
BE PERMANENT.

"I WAS STRIPPED DOWN  
TO MY PHYSICAL CORE  
AND PATCHED BACK  
TOGETHER. BUT IT GAVE  
ME A TASTE OF THE  
AFTERLIFE AND WHAT IT  
COULD BE LIKE. I'VE BEEN  
TRYING TO GET BACK  
THERE EVER SINCE.

"ALL I NEEDED WAS **SPAWN'S**  
HELP. YEAR AFTER YEAR I TRIED  
TO GET HIS ASSISTANCE. BUT  
HE'D CHANGED! CHANGED IN  
A WAY THAT NO ONE COULD  
MANIPULATE. NOT ME, HEAVEN  
OR HELL, NOR EVEN HIS  
ARMOR."

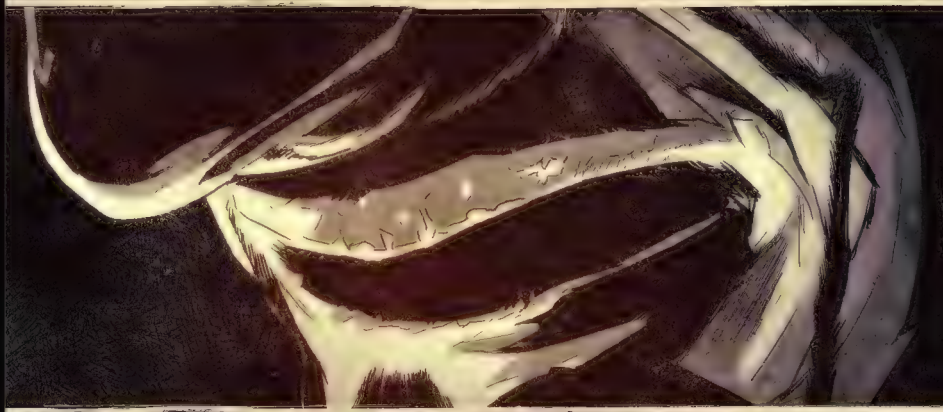




THAT'S WHAT  
BEGAN MAKING YOU  
SO IMPORTANT BECAUSE IF  
SIMMONS WASN'T GOING  
TO BECOME THE WARRIOR  
WE WANTED-- YOU WERE  
ALL I HAD LEFT.

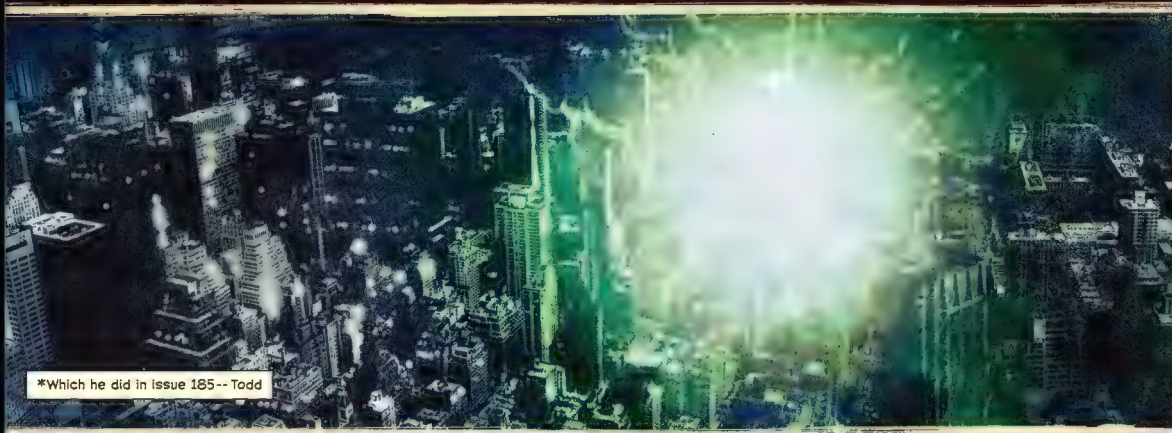
AND ALL  
THIS WENT  
DOWN WITH-  
OUT ANY  
LEAKS?

MOSTLY.  
EACH TIME WE MOVED  
KRAMER I ELIMINATED  
MOST OF THOSE INVOLVED  
WITH HIS PRIOR IDENTITY.  
AFTER A DOZEN MOVES  
HIS TRAIL WAS NEARLY  
UNTRACEABLE WITH ONLY  
A FEW PEOPLE IN  
THE KNOW.



BUT I  
KNEW THE TIME  
WOULD COME  
EVENTUALLY WHEN  
I WOULD GET  
'THE CALL.'

THAT  
YOU, FOR  
WHATEVER  
REASON, HAD  
AWOKEN  
FROM YOUR  
COMA.\*

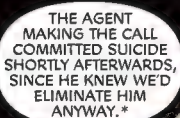


\*Which he did in Issue 185-- Todd



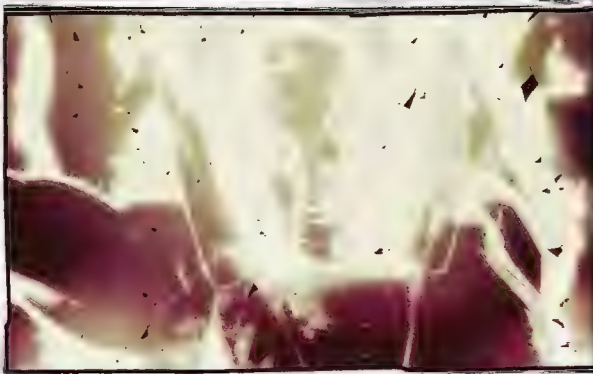
**SON!**





THE AGENT  
MAKING THE CALL  
COMMITTED SUICIDE  
SHORTLY AFTERWARDS,  
SINCE HE KNEW WE'D  
ELIMINATE HIM  
ANYWAY.\*

\* Another mystery solved  
from issue 185-- Todd

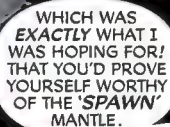


"MY CONCERN, THOUGH,  
WAS TO IMMEDIATELY TEST  
YOU. I HIRED ONE OF YOUR  
FORMER STAFF MEMBERS  
WHO SENT WAVE AFTER  
WAVE OF PAST PATIENTS  
AGAINST YOU.

"I'M SURE RICHARD,  
HERE, PROBABLY GOT  
A CALL OR TWO ASKING  
HIM TO COME OUT OF  
RETIREMENT.

"BUT NO MATTER WHAT  
CAME YOUR WAY...  
YOU CRUSHED IT."\*

\* Issues 185 to 196-- Todd



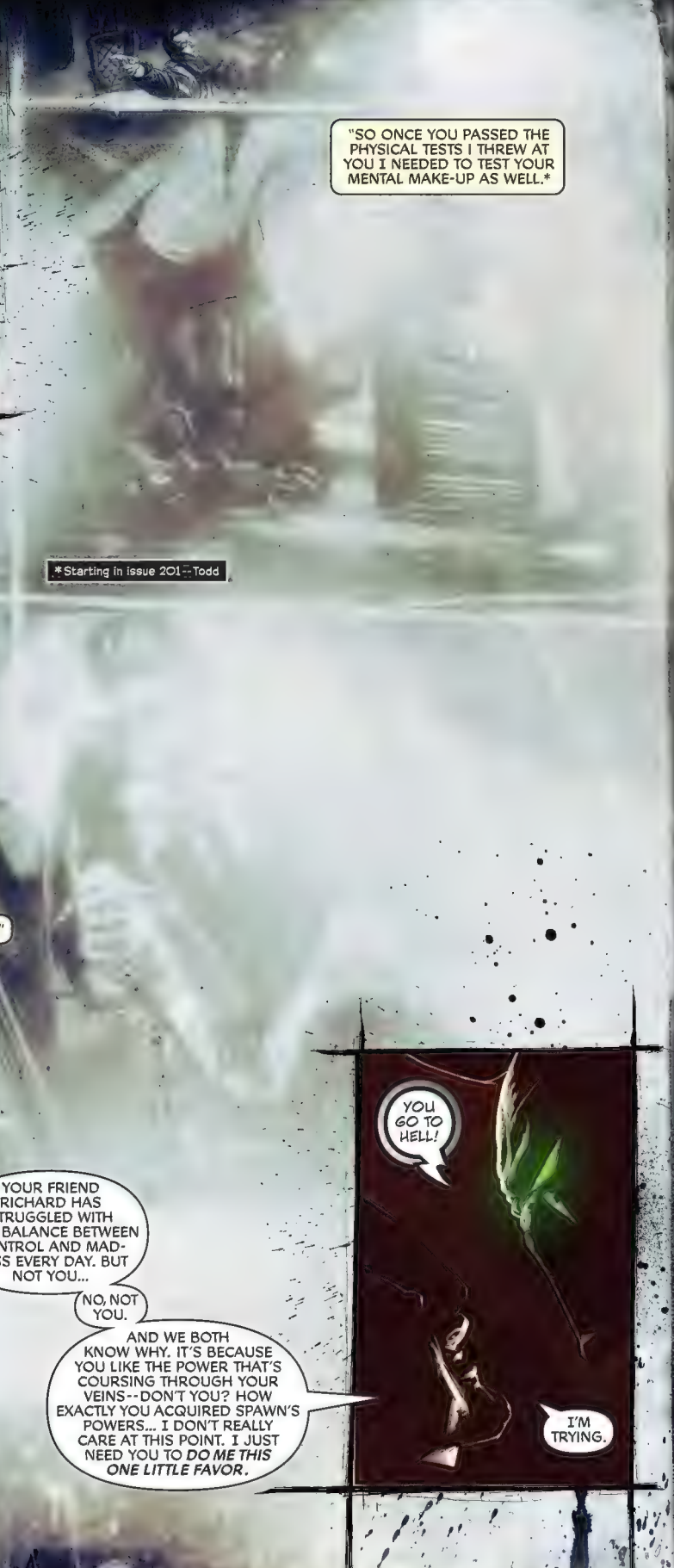
WHICH WAS  
EXACTLY WHAT I  
WAS HOPING FOR!  
THAT YOU'D PROVE  
YOURSELF WORTHY  
OF THE 'SPAWN'  
MANTLE.

AND WITH  
SIMMONS  
GONE-- YOU'RE  
NOW MY NEW  
SECRET  
WEAPON.





I JUST  
NEEDED TO  
MAKE SURE WE'D  
MEET UNDER  
**OPTIMUM  
CONDITIONS.**  
SINCE I NEED YOU  
TO DO SOMETHING  
VERY IMPORTANT  
FOR ME.

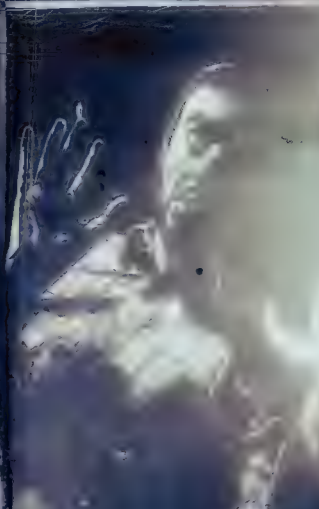


"SO ONCE YOU PASSED THE  
PHYSICAL TESTS I THREW AT  
YOU I NEEDED TO TEST YOUR  
MENTAL MAKE-UP AS WELL.\*

\*Starting in issue 201--Todd

"THAT WAS GOING TO BE THE TRUE  
BAROMETER. HOW BADLY DID YOU  
WANT TO FIND YOUR PAST AND  
HOW HARD WOULD YOU WORK  
TOWARDS THAT GOAL? SEE, IT'S THE  
HUMAN EMOTIONS THAT THE  
ARMOR FEEDS OFF OF--AND IF YOU  
WEREN'T STRONG ENOUGH PSYCHO-  
LOGICALLY THE ARMOR YOU'RE  
WEARING WOULD HAVE ALREADY  
CONSUMED YOUR SANITY.

"BUT IT HASN'T."



YOUR FRIEND  
RICHARD HAS  
STRUGGLED WITH  
THAT BALANCE BETWEEN  
CONTROL AND MAD-  
NESS EVERY DAY. BUT  
NOT YOU...

NO, NOT  
YOU.

AND WE BOTH  
KNOW WHY. IT'S BECAUSE  
YOU LIKE THE POWER THAT'S  
COURSING THROUGH YOUR  
VEINS--DON'T YOU? HOW  
EXACTLY YOU ACQUIRED SPAWN'S  
POWERS... I DON'T REALLY  
CARE AT THIS POINT. I JUST  
NEED YOU TO **DO ME THIS  
ONE LITTLE FAVOR.**



YOU  
GO TO  
HELL!

I'M  
TRYING.





ASK  
ME!

WHAT ARE  
YOU AFRAID OF?  
ASK ME WHAT I WANT!  
YOU MIGHT BE  
SURPRISED!



CHINK

CHINK

SNAP

HAHAHA  
HEEHAHAHA  
HAHAHA

THAT'S IT!  
USE YOUR  
ANGER... YOUR...  
RAGE...



JIM-- LOOK,  
I KNOW YOU THINK  
I BETRAYED YOU-- BUT  
YOU'VE COME THIS FAR.  
HE'S COMPLETELY MAD  
BUT JUST SEE WHAT  
HE WANTS.

I PLAN  
TO...  
ALONE.

I NEED YOU  
TO GO. I DON'T  
WANT TO SEE YOU  
EVER AGAIN. IS  
THAT CLEAR?

Sure...





Whatever.



SO...  
WHAT IS  
IT YOU  
WANT?



YOU'RE  
PATHETIC!

LOOK AT  
YOU! YOU'RE NO  
**SIMMONS!!**  
AND YOU NEVER WILL BE!  
HE AT LEAST HAD THE GUTS  
TO PROTECT HIS WIFE. THAT'S  
ALL HE CARED ABOUT! HE  
WOULD NEVER HAVE LET  
ME DO THAT TO HIS  
WOMAN!



OH--YOU'VE  
GOT IT WRONG--  
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY  
WITH IT. I JUST HAVE ONE  
LAST QUESTION FOR YOU...  
**WHAT DO YOU  
WANT?**





THE EASIEST  
THING YOU  
CAN IMAGINE, I  
WANT YOU TO  
KILL ME.



DON'T  
F\*CK WITH  
ME!



NOW TELL ME--  
WHY DID YOU  
WANT ME  
HERE?



I TOLD YOU!  
I NEED YOU  
TO KILL ME!!


IT'S THE ONLY  
WAY TO GET BACK  
WHAT I'VE LOST! HELL  
MADE ME A DEAL. SAYING  
IF I WANTED TO REDEEM  
MYSELF FROM GIVING  
THEM AN IMPERFECT  
SIMMONS--I NEEDED  
TO SACRIFICE  
MYSELF!

THEN I'D  
GET WHAT THEY  
PROMISED! BUT SPAWN  
NEEDED TO KILL ME--  
ANYONE ELSE AND I'D GET  
NOTHING! THAT WAS HELL'S  
RULE! NO MATTER HOW  
HARD I SCREWED WITH  
SIMMONS HE  
NEVER DID IT!



SO YOU  
MUST!





NOW  
DO IT!  
THAT'S AN  
ORDER!

YOU'RE  
GOING TO DIE...  
BUT NOT THE  
WAY **YOU**  
WANT.

YOUR  
ARMOR??!  
WHAT  
HAVE  
YOU...

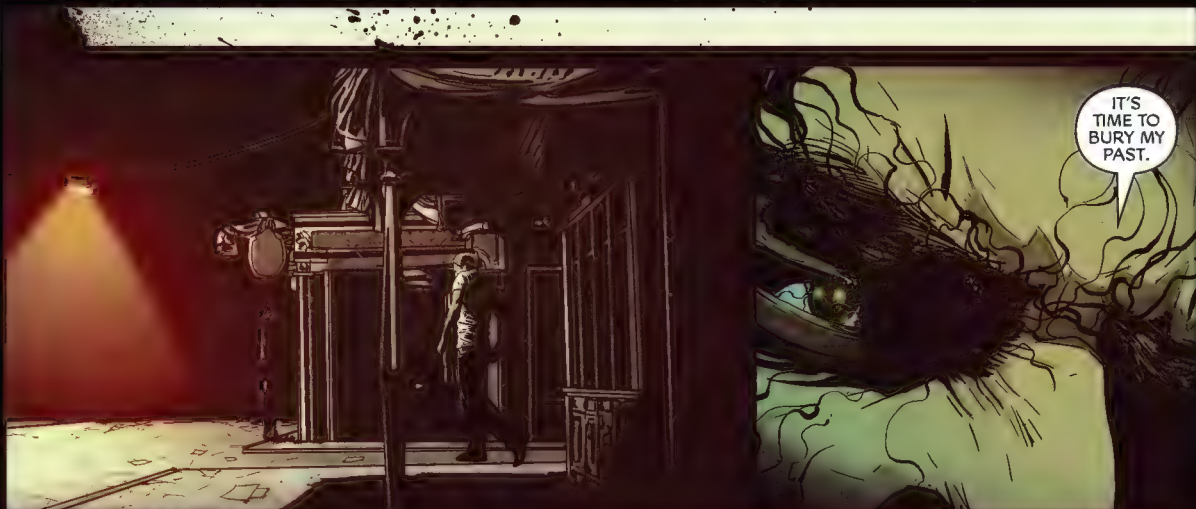
DONE  
WITH IT? IT'S  
GONE. I SENT  
IT AWAY. IT'S  
JUST ME...JIM  
DOWNING.

SPAWN'S  
NOT KILLING  
YOU TONIGHT.  
**I AM!**

SO YOU'LL  
BE DEAD AND  
GET **NOTHING**  
FROM HELL!

**SNAP**





IT'S  
TIME TO  
BURY MY  
PAST.



FOREVER.



JESUS!

JIM...  
WHAT'RE  
YOU  
DOING?









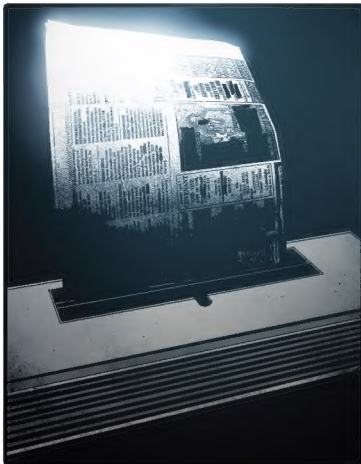
WHO

AM

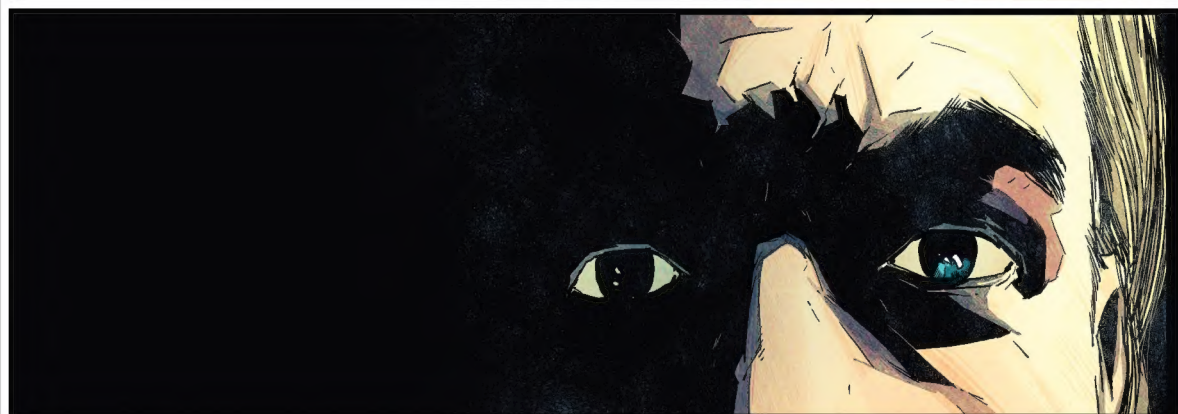
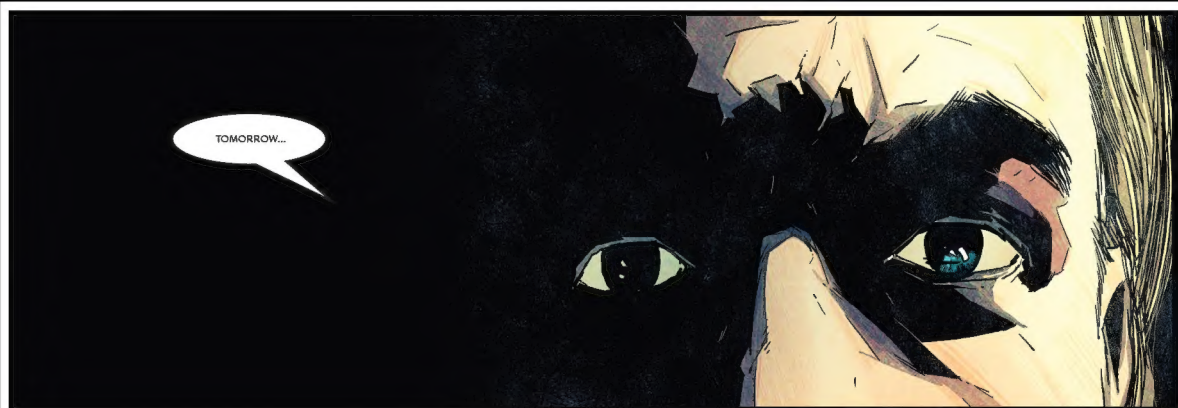
1??















Tyrant  
Lizard  
King

EMPIRE